



Department of Justice

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FLORIDA DOCTOR SENTENCED TO 18 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR MEDICARE FRAUD

WASHINGTON – A doctor involved in a \$7 million HIV infusion therapy scheme to defraud Medicare has been sentenced to 18 months in prison, seven months home confinement, and three years supervised release, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney R. Alexander Acosta of the Southern District of Florida announced today.

Dr. Orestes Alvarez-Jacinto, 80, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Patricia Seitz at the federal court in Miami. In addition to the prison term, Alvarez-Jacinto was sentenced to seven months home confinement and three years supervised release. Judge Seitz also ordered Alvarez-Jacinto to pay \$90,000 in forfeiture and \$5,116,366 in restitution for submitting and causing the submission of approximately \$7 million worth of fraudulent claims to the Medicare program.

Alvarez-Jacinto pleaded guilty on June 12, 2007, to one count of conspiracy to commit health care fraud. From June 2003 until November 2003, Alvarez-Jacinto was employed as medical director at Saint Jude Rehab Center, a medical clinic that purported to specialize in treating patients with HIV. During that period, Alvarez-Jacinto authorized and approved the use of the drug WinRho, along with a mix of various vitamin supplements, for each HIV patient he was seeing, knowing that the HIV patients did not need WinRho and that the drug could actually harm them. In total, Alvarez-Jacinto approved over \$7 million worth of fraudulent medical bills, which were submitted to Medicare for payment, and the Medicare Program paid approximately \$5 million worth of those fraudulent bills to Saint Jude, at Alvarez-Jacinto's direction. Alvarez-Jacinto was paid approximately \$90,000 for his role in approving the fraudulent bills.

The case was prosecuted by Trial Attorney Hank Bond Walter from the Fraud Section of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., with investigative assistance of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Inspector General, and the FBI. The Medicare Strike Force is led by Deputy Chief Kirk Ogrosky of the Fraud Section, and supervised by the Criminal Division in Washington, D.C., and the office of U.S. Attorney R. Alexander Acosta of the Southern District of Florida. Since beginning operations in March of 2007, the strike force teams have indicted approximately 80 cases and 120 defendants in Miami-Dade County alone.

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